

**Standard 8-6:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of South Carolina's development during the early twentieth century.

**8-6.1** Summarize the progressive reform movement in South Carolina, including the motivation of progressives; child labor laws; Prohibition; improvements to roads, hospitals, and libraries; tax reforms; changes to local government systems; and the roles of significant state governors and women's groups. (H, P, E)

**Taxonomy Level:** B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students explained how building cities and industries led to progressive reforms, including labor reforms, business reforms, and Prohibition (5-3.1).

In United States history, students will compare the accomplishments and limitations of the progressive movement in effecting social and political reforms in America, including the roles of Theodore Roosevelt, Jane Addams, W. E. B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington (USHC-5.7).

**It is essential for students to know:**

It is essential for students to understand that the progressive movement developed in response to the problems of the growing cities and the changing workplace in the late nineteenth century. Progressivism was essentially a movement of the middle class who objected to paying taxes to corrupt city governments and who desired better city services. Nationally, Progressives wanted to reform corrupt government, end the monopolistic practices of Big Business, improve the conditions of the industrial working class and address the problems of both immigrants and migrants. Progressivism reached a large audience through the work of 'muckraking' journalists. The progressive movement started at the city and state level with progressive mayors and governors and gained support at the national level with the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. Progressives even formed a national political party under the leadership of Roosevelt.

Throughout the country, Progressive ideals were often in conflict with the cultural values of those whom they attempted to reform. For instance, progressives supported temperance and prohibition as a way to improve morality. However, this conflicted with the cultures of many of the immigrants groups that they wanted to 'help' such as the Italians, the Irish and the Germans. Progressives supported limitations on child labor. However, working class families needed their children to bring needed income to the family. Between 1900 and 1910, over 200,000 African Americans migrated from the South to the North. African-American club women and institutions such as the Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People which included such progressives as W.E.B. DuBois and Ida B. Wells Barnett wanted to improve conditions for African Americans. However, other progressives wanted to reform politics and society by limiting the rights of African Americans.

In South Carolina, many of these national issues held little concern. South Carolinians were not interested in promoting the rights of African Americans or in solving the problems of new immigrants, since few came to the state. For Southerners, such as Ben Tillman, disenfranchising the African American was seen as a progressive reform since such an act removed from the body politic a group deemed inferior to whites and not able to make intelligent decisions. The major issues of the progressives in South Carolina included child labor and fair treatment for workers, temperance, women's suffrage and improving education. Just as with the Populist movement, progressive South Carolinians did not want to align themselves with the national movement or party but rather worked within the Democratic Party.

The problems of the cities of the North prompted Northern progressives to propose reform and the problems of the mill villages prompted South Carolina progressives to support reform. Newspapers in South Carolina, like muckraking journalists elsewhere, supported child labor reform, as did women's groups of both races. Despite the opposition of mill owners and some workers, progressives were able to pass some **child labor laws** that first set the minimum age to work at twelve and then raised it to fourteen. Progressives were also concerned with issues of health and literacy as diseases spread through mill villages and mill workers remained largely illiterate. Education reforms included a compulsory attendance law and increased funding. Although South Carolina had a state hospital for the mentally ill since the early 1800s, a state hospital for patients suffering from tuberculosis was established on the outskirts of Columbia at this time. Money was raised by women's leagues to build libraries in places such as Darlington and Newberry. However, like facilities throughout South Carolina, there were separate facilities for African-American and white citizens.

Governor Tillman had thwarted the efforts of the temperance movement to pass a state **prohibition** law that would ban the sale of alcohol in South Carolina by creating the State Dispensary system (8-5.2). The dispensary was a notoriously corrupt organization and became a target of good government progressives. Local governments addressed the issue and, by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a substantial number [over 20 out of 43] of counties in South Carolina had passed prohibition laws and were "dry" counties. In 1915, the state passed a prohibition law and in 1918 the United States amended the United States Constitution to outlaw the sale and distribution of alcohol. However, many South Carolinians engaged in making, distributing or drinking illegal alcohol, as did people throughout the United States.

Nationally, many young educated women took a leading role in promoting social reform during the progressive movement. In South Carolina, women's clubs affiliated with the South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs and their national federation promoted prohibition, fostered civic responsibility and pushed for education reforms. The women of Trinity Episcopal Church in Columbia established the first tuberculosis treatment center in the state. African American women formed clubs that promoted better health and education in their communities. However, South Carolina's women's groups did not play a leading role in the suffrage movement. There was an Equal Rights Association of women, however, it rallied little support for women's suffrage in the state. The South Carolina legislature did not ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment until 1967. Despite this, women in South Carolina were able to vote because of the ratification of the amendment by other states.

Several state governors also played a role in promoting reforms in South Carolina. Governor Robert Cooper supported raising taxes to increase spending on public education and supported a law that increased the amount of time students were to spend in school to 7 months. Despite these efforts graduation rates from high schools in South Carolina, especially African American high schools, were extremely low due to a limited numbers of high schools provided by the state. Coleman Blease followed in the tradition of Ben Tillman and used racist rhetoric to secure the governor's mansion. Efforts to establish law and order and limit lynching were undermined by Governor Blease. Blease, who was not a progressive, championed the rights of the mill workers against the "do-gooder" middle class progressives. Mill workers resented anyone telling them when their children could work or that they had to go to school or that they should be inoculated against disease. Governor Richard Manning was a progressive governor with a progressive General Assembly. He helped to establish a fair tax system that enforced income taxes for all South Carolinians, established schools, improved the administration of hospitals and paved South Carolina's roads. The South Carolina Highway Department was created in 1917 and the government supported the construction of new roads for increased automobile traffic. Many South Carolinians embraced the idea that good government could improve the lives of the state's people.

World War I brought an end to the progressive movement but not an end to the problems the movement had tried to address.

**It is not essential for students to know:**

Although students should understand that the national temperance movement was motivated in part by the desire to control the behavior of immigrants, students do not need to know that many immigrant groups such as the Italians, Irish and Germans used bars and saloons as the center of their political clubs and as sites of wedding celebrations. Students do not need to know that the federal child labor law passed during the Progressive Movement set the minimum age for working at 16 but was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Students do not need to know that the minimum age for children to enter the work force that is currently recognized was passed during the New Deal. Although the New Deal was an extension of the progressive movement, it is considered a separate reform period. Students do not need to know the current laws on drinking in the state of South Carolina. Students do not need to know about chain gang reform or other specific reforms that took place in South Carolina during the progressive era.

Although students should know that women of both races played a significant role in the progressive movement in South Carolina, as they did in the rest of the nation, they do not need to know the names of specific reformers or organizations. For instance, they do not need to know that Dr. Matilda Evans founded the Negro Health Association and trained African American women as nurses or that she established the Taylor Lane Hospital. The South Carolina Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was organized in 1909, the same year as the NAACP. The federation created the Fairwold Home in Columbia, a school for orphaned and abused girls.

**Assessment guidelines:**

Appropriate assessment will require students to **summarize** the motivations for the progressive reform movement in South Carolina. Students should be able to **explain** how the progressive movement led to regulations on child labor and drinking as well as to improvements in social services such as hospitals, libraries, road systems and state government. Students should be able to **compare** the success of the progressive movement in South Carolina with its success in the rest of the United States. Students should also be able to **identify** several state governors and women's groups that contributed to the progressive movement in South Carolina.